

the special operations Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) operating with naval ships, boats, and personnel along the Mekong River of South Vietnam.

After surviving four months of intense combat, he was promoted to sergeant and volunteered to walk point, a position with a life span of approximately three weeks. He served for over four months, using the skills he learned in the hills of eastern Kentucky to protect himself and his fellow soldiers until he was shot five times during an ambush operation. Fortunately, he survived this attack.

Mr. Belcher was decorated with the Army Commendation Medal for Valor twice, earned the Air Medal, combat infantryman's Badge, Vietnam Service and Campaign Ribbons, the elite spear-header shoulder patch of the MRF, and the Purple Heart.

After his military service, he attended the University of Kentucky on the GI bill where he earned a bachelor's degree in business and marketing. Despite devastating war wounds to his chest and arm, he successfully walked onto the university's baseball team where he earned a scholarship, along with All-SEC and All-American honors.

Mr. Belcher has since founded HoldTime, an award winning national message-on-hold production company over 20 years ago. He remains vocal and active in the political life of his community, and has just been awarded the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Patriot Award.

As a U.S. Congressman, I am forever grateful for Gerard Belcher's service to our country. Because of his bravery and that of his fellow men and women in uniform, our American freedoms are protected for future generations. He is truly a hero to us all.

HONORING VIRGINIA STATE POLICE TROOPER JAMES LAWSON

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send my thoughts and prayers to Virginia State Police Trooper James Lawson of Gate City, Virginia.

On April 9, Trooper Lawson was injured during a high-speed pursuit in Scott County, sustaining a spinal cord injury. He was transported to Holsten Valley Medical Center in Kingsport. Trooper Lawson is now receiving treatment at Atlanta's Shepherd Center, which specializes in treatment and rehabilitation for people having sustained spinal cord or brain injuries.

Trooper Lawson is a dedicated member of the Virginia State Police, having served in law enforcement for 18 years. He is also active in serving the area as a proud member of the Gate City Volunteer Fire Department. He is now Assistant Chief, serving in the Gate City Volunteer Fire Department since he was 16.

Trooper Lawson is married to his wife Aimee, who is employed by the Scott County Sheriff's Department. He also has two children, Ashley and Trey. Trooper Lawson and his family are friends to many in the Gate City area, including members of my staff.

Thank you, Trooper Lawson and Aimee, for your service to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Gate City community. I think I speak

on behalf of all Scott County residents in wishing Trooper Lawson the very best as he continues working to recover.

COL. POOLE'S BIRTHDAY

HON. TOM GRAVES

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a great American, a dedicated small business owner in the North Georgia town of Ellijay. Who is often spotted with a yellow suit, an American flag tie, and top hat.

He is a true advocate for low taxes and less government, and is always sure to voice his opinions about candidates for political office.

Col. Poole and his lovely wife Edna founded Poole's Bar-B-Q . . . known in some circles as the "TAJ-MA-HOG". . . which rests in the shadow of the "Pig-Hill-of-Fame" adorned with plywood cutout hogs with patron's names painted on them.

In order to qualify for a pig on the hill, he has stated that all you need is, "an honest face, good intentions, and five dollars."

Next Monday, April 29, this fine patriot will turn 83 years old—so today I wanted to take a minute to say—"Oscar, from all the way in Washington, DC—I want to wish you a very happy birthday!"

TOYOTA ARIZONA PROVING GROUND'S (TAPG) 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to congratulate the Toyota Arizona Proving Ground (TAPG) as it celebrates its 20th anniversary. I have had the opportunity to visit and learn about their operations and am proud to represent the Toyota team members working at this fine facility. The 12,000 acre facility's most dramatic feature is the 10 mile, high speed, oval track. But in addition, it is home to many more miles of unique test tracks and a state-of-the-art engineering facility.

TAPG, which is part of Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing, Inc., is responsible for evaluating the performance and endurance of Toyota vehicles on the test tracks in Wittmann, Arizona. TAPG employs about 50 team members and welcomes hundreds of contractors and visiting engineers each year—all contributing to Arizona's economy and to the development of Toyota's American made vehicles.

As their representative to Congress, I want to reiterate my commitment to supporting policies and a federal regulatory environment that encourages companies, like Toyota, to continue to invest in research and development in Arizona and across the United States.

HONORING OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE STUDENT JOURNALISTS

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House of Representatives today to honor five young people from Raymondville, Texas. Their project, titled "I Am Raymondville," earned them the top prize in the Diocese of Brownsville's Mobile Journalist Project, and their work has been entered in a national contest.

Rosa Barrera, Carla Bocanegra, Ralia Cortinas, Jose Trevino, and Celyna Vasquez set out to report on life in their community. With the assignment to chronicle poverty and homelessness in Raymondville, the five students from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish interviewed a bearded homeless man who was often seen near the Expressway 77 overpass.

The students, ranging from sixth graders to a high school junior, were impressed by Kent Karl Kauten's warm and friendly manner, and he told them he had served in the Vietnam War and was a Navy veteran. Kauten was found dead just three days after the interview, and, when the student journalists learned that he would be cremated and buried in a pauper's grave, they sought to ensure that Kent Karl Kauten's passing was honored with a full Catholic funeral mass and a military burial.

Working with local officials, the five students were able to confirm Mr. Kauten's military service and his eligibility for military honors, and they raised money to pay for his funeral—often seeking donations on the streets. As the students participated in the funeral at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and the burial, they stood in place of his family and ensured that the combat veteran was treated with dignity and respect.

Rosa, Carla, Ralia, Jose and Celyna set out to chronicle life in Raymondville. They saw poverty and homelessness, but they didn't just take a snapshot—they made a difference. They recognized a need and they stepped in where no one else had to ensure that an American hero would not be forgotten. We owe an immense debt of gratitude to our nation's veterans who have sacrificed so much, and these dedicated young journalists have set an example of kindness and respect that our nation should follow.

Today, I join the City of Raymondville, the State of Texas, and the United States Congress in honoring the Our Lady of Guadalupe Mobile Journalists.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF CALIFORNIA'S LUPE C. HERRERA

HON. GLORIA NEGRETE McLEOD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 26, 2013

Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD. Mr. Speaker, let us commemorate the life of Lupe C. Herrera, a devoted member of the United States Army, who passed away on April 22 in Ontario, California at the age of 94.

Mr. Herrera enlisted in the Army on December 2, 1941, just a few days before the attack